



James S. Rickards High School
School Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
January 18, 2022
6:00 pm – ZOOM

Welcome

- Ms. Wells, DAC chair, welcomed all parents, teachers and community leaders.

Agenda

- Mr. Cook made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Dr. McNeil.
Agenda approved.

Minutes

- Dr. McNeil made a motion to approve the November and December minutes, seconded by Ms. Young. Corrections to December minutes- Add IB and AP tests at TCC and that there will be transportation provided from Rickards to TCC for both. Minutes approved with necessary corrections.

Student Government Association (SGA) Update

- SGA Vice President Amaya Waymon provided an updated from SGA. All class trips have been finalized. Currently planning field trip to elementary schools for Literacy Week. Planning pep rally and kickball and dodge ball games for the spring.

Principal's Report

- **Communicating Threats of Violence-** Mr. Cook explained that the school received a tip about a threat of violence. The Rickards Administration determined the threat to not be credible. Information is sent out to parents via the Rickards Listserv not the website. Rickards communicates to parents via Listserv. He encouraged parents to join the Listserv and SAC and to also invite others to join as well. Dr. McNeil explained the Peach Jar system, which provides flier style information to parents signed up for the Listserv.
- **Report Cards-** Mr. Cook mentioned that report cards were available on FOCUS as of last week. All freshman should have a least 3 credits; if not, have them contact their counselor.
- **State of the Graduating Class-** Mr. Cook explained that the State Board of Education is looking at lowering this year's standards back to last year's standards. Received the graduation rate and last year's graduation rate is 94.7% for 2021.
- **First Semester Exams-** Students did well for first semester exams.
- **Class Rankings for Seniors-** All items need to be translated to transcript as soon as possible. First class ranking will be done the first week of February.
- **IB Open House-** IB Open House is scheduled for tomorrow, Jan. 19. Dr. McNeil explained that Rickards is currently working on the application for the IB Career Program (IBCP). Students will not only receive certification in career related study, but also be able to take IB classes related to their career related studies.

This track allows students to take the IB English and Literature class, a 2-year class, which will help them pass the IB exam. After passing the IB exam, they will be able to receive credit for ENC 1101 and 1102.

- **Law Academy-** Mr. Cook mentioned creating a Law Academy program as a feeder program from Nims' Middle Schools program. Administration has created the course of study and there are 3 courses of study- law, law enforcement, and paralegal. SAC discussed including real world application through shadowing members in the community and involving the Tallahassee Chamber in the program.
- **COVID Update- Masks and Quarantine Days-** Mr. Cowart provided a COVID update and student protocols. Students have a 10-day quarantine process (from test or symptoms) and does not require a negative test. Students aren't penalized for quarantining and absences are excused. Teachers and facility are under a 5-day quarantine process. Teachers and facility wear masks.
- **Additional Information-** Tutoring for students- Rickards has tutoring in 21st Century, AVID and the online program, Solutions Skills.

Advisory Council Reports

District Advisory Council (DAC) Report

- Ms. Wells provided an updated from the January 2022 DAC meeting. Superintendent Hanna provided updates for quarantine for students. Hanna also discussed the move from FSA to progress monitoring, graduation rates, and enrollment numbers. The DAC heard from School Board Member Darryl Jones, who discussed the importance of career and technical education and partnering with schools in these areas. Received a report from the Student DAC and what high schools are doing in relation to mental health and ways to get students engaged. Received a technology update and how the District is simplifying things on FOCUS and Canvas. School Choice opened in January and closes March 1. The DAC information about the change in instructional materials with the change moving into the BEST Standards. Heard a report from the Leon County Teachers Association related to LGBTQ+ support in the schools.

Title I Advisory Council (TAC) Report

- Ms. Lemman provided an update from the TAC. She discussed the Individual Freedom Bill (SB 148/HB 78), which proposes to prevent infringement of individual freedoms in teaching of difficult concepts in our history; however, it basically stops teachers from teaching the history of the United States. TAC heard a presentation from Jordan Spells, who is working to create an organization to help teachers in the area of professional development.

New Business/Announcements

- Dr. McNeil will send the Solutions Skills information to the SAC email to be sent out to all SAC members.
- Graduation- Mr. Cook explained that graduation plans are returning to traditional plans. Rickards Graduation is May 28 at 10am at the Civic Center.

- Parent Involvement- Ms. Wells explained the importance of parent involvement in student's success. SAC members serve as advocates for the school.
- Southside Foundation- Dr. Iris Wilson explained that two Foundation board members, Mark O'Brien and Cheryl Robinson, both from Tallahassee Memorial, would like to know what participation students will need to complete their certification hours. Additionally, the Foundation has board members in law and law enforcement, who can serve as resources for the Rickards programs. Foundation's Tech Center, located at 900 Bates Dr., Unit 3, has tutoring available Monday through Friday from 2pm-6pm, and also has help for adults interested in completing their GEDs.
- Mr. Cook mentioned that construction is complete. Rickards will host an honor roll ceremony in the new courtyard.

Next Meeting

The next meeting has been tentatively set for February 15, 2022.

Adjourn

Motioned for adjournment of the meeting -- motion seconded. Meeting Adjourned at 7:33pm.